



## ASI's Plan to Conserve Taj Mahal

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The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has submitted a host of measures as part of a "Site Management Plan" to the Supreme Court, in pursuance of its order earlier this year, for conserving the Taj Mahal.

A site management plan is a document which gives a holistic perspective on conservation and management of the site.

### Background

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- White marble used in the monument has turned yellow due to air pollution.
- **Water stagnation** in the Yamuna river and **high phosphorus levels** on the riverbed made it a breeding ground for **insects that form brown and green patches on the walls of the Taj.**
- Sweat, oil and dirt from visitors being getting absorbed into the marble of the Taj.

### Measures Suggested in the Plan

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- **For avoiding discolouration:**
  - Scientific treatment and cleaning of the replica graves and surrounding walls inside the mausoleum.
  - To prevent dust from spreading, mechanical and wet cleaning of roads within 5-km radius of the monument, has been suggested.
  - Making shoe cover mandatory for entering the mausoleum premises has also been suggested.
  - All buildings and gardens within the complex need to be regularly maintained to ensure its good state of preservation.
- **For tackling pollution:**
  - A complete ban on burning of biomass/municipal waste.
  - All public transport running in the city should be CNG-based or battery-operated.

- Encouraging plantation in the city's open areas and strict implementation of the National Building Code for construction-related activities.
- Encouraging the use of electric crematorium and cleaning up of the banks of the river Yamuna.
- **For managing footfall:**
  - Alternate queuing systems and differential ticketing systems must be used and extra security personnel be deployed at various locations to cater to the high footfall.

## Taj Mahal

- The Taj Mahal (Agra) is a **mausoleum of white marble built by the Mughal emperor, Shahjahan** in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. It **stands on the banks of the river Yamuna**.
- The construction of the Taj Mahal was completed within a period of 17 years from **1631 to 1648 AD**.
- The Taj Mahal was declared a **centrally protected monument of national importance in December 1920**.
- Considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, it was inscribed on the list of **World Heritage Sites in 1983**.
- It is famous for its unique layout, perfection in symmetry and inlay work.